

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 116 are pending in the application. Of these, claims 31 through 54, 70 through 85 and 96 through 116 are withdrawn from consideration. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1 through 12 and 14 through 116 will remain pending.

Applicants again note with appreciation the fact that the Office Action (Action) states that claims 18 through 30, 55 through 69 and 86 through 95 are allowed. Applicants also note with appreciation the fact that the Action states that claims 9 through 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,524,269 to McNamara.

Claim 1 recites a multiple-component tampon applicator formed from at least three separate components selected from the group consisting of a barrel, a finger grip, a plunger, and an insertion tip. The at least three separate components are formed independently from one another, prior to forming the applicator. At least one of the at least three separate components is the finger grip, wherein the finger grip further comprises at least one gripping structure.

Claim 1 now recites the allowable subject matter previously recited in claim 13. As such, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over McNamara, consistent with the Action's statement that the subject matter of claim 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. As such, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

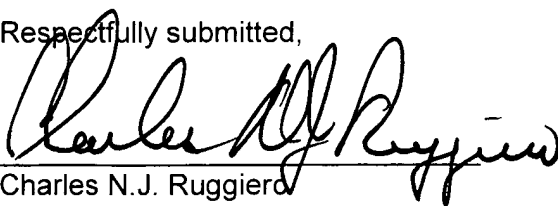
Claims 2 through 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over McNamara in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,056,714 to McNelis et al. (McNelis).

Claims 2 through 6 depend directly from claim 1, which is set forth above. As noted above, McNamara fails to disclose or suggest a multiple-component tampon applicator, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, it follows that dependent claims 2 through 6 are also patentably distinguishable over McNamara taken alone, or in combination with McNelis, which also fails to disclose or suggest the multiple-component tampon applicator recited in claim 1. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of claims 2 through 6 is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present application are patentably distinguishable over the cited art, taken alone or in combination, and, as such, passage of the application to allowance is earnestly requested.

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Respectfully submitted,



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